

**DEPARTMENTAL PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER**

**DEFINITION:**

Under general direction, to oversee, develop, and coordinate the Public Affairs Program for the large county departments; to advise and assist management in public information/relations activities; and to perform related work.

**DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS:**

This class is allocated to large county departments. The incumbent is responsible for coordinating and implementing overall public affairs programs. This class is distinguished from the Public Information Specialist in that the latter handles specialized departmental public relations activities.

**EXAMPLES OF DUTIES:**

Oversees and coordinates the activities of the public information program for the large county departments; establishes and maintains regular contact with the press, community groups, and department managers in order to meet the department's public affairs needs; plans, writes, and provides news releases for radio, television, magazines, and newspapers; develops and implements the department's strategic media/public relations and/or marketing plan; organizes and arranges public information campaigns, press conferences, and other community outreach efforts such as commercial sponsorships; coordinates special events, programs, ceremonies, and public affairs activities for the department, and coordinates such activities with other agencies when necessary; oversees the preparation of and/or creates departmental public information materials such as brochures, bulletins, newsletters, pamphlets, posters, audio-visual presentations, web sites, and other publications; writes scripts and prepares presentations and speeches; acts as staff for and provides input to various boards, committees, groups, and agencies; initiates and answers correspondence relating to public information inquiries and citizens' problems and complaints; conducts county tours for citizen and educational groups; may assist in the preparation of speeches given by county officials; may supervise the work of subordinate staff; and performs other duties and special projects as assigned.

**MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:**

**Knowledge of:**

- Methods of planning and implementing an effective public information program.
- Principles and techniques in the preparation for telemedia.
- Script writing for slide and audio-visual presentations.
- Techniques in planning press conferences.
- Principles in planning media releases.
- Styles and techniques of writing speeches.
- Methods and techniques used in evaluating public attitudes regarding the operations of a county department and the determination of public affairs needs.
- Photography as it relates to media and public relations.

**Skills and Abilities to:**

- Provide effective interpersonal communication and public speaking.
- Plan effective public affairs programs.
- Effectively liaison with policy makers in the media, government, and business sectors.
- Prepare bulletins, pamphlets, posters, and audio-visual presentations.
- Compose media releases.
- Prioritize and handle multiple projects.

**EDUCATION/EXPERIENCE:**

Education, training, and experience that would likely demonstrate the knowledge, skills and abilities listed above. Examples of qualifying education/experience are: a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university in journalism, public relations, communications, or a closely related field, AND:

1. Two (2) years as a Public Information Specialist with the County of San Diego; OR:
2. Three (3) years of experience in public or community relations work involving the dissemination of information to the public through various communications media.

**Note:** Additional years of experience as described above may substitute for the education requirement on a year-for-year basis; OR, completion of appropriate coursework from an accredited college or university may substitute for the experience requirement on a year-for-year basis.

**SPECIAL NOTES, LICENSES, OR REQUIREMENTS:****License:**

A valid California Class C driver's license, which must be maintained throughout employment in this class, is required at time of appointment or the ability to arrange necessary transportation for field travel. Employees in this class may be required to use their personal vehicle.

**Probationary Period:**

Incumbents appointed to permanent positions in this class shall serve a probationary period of 12 months (Civil Service Rule 4.2.5).

